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shifting life, precarious living, and unsteady calling must have taught you, would have made you less positive in the actual reality of any disinterested good in man."

"Oh! far otherwise," rejoined Benson. "There is a living, uncorrupted stream in the world's bosom, of pure benevolence the multitude have little knowledge of; and, though rocks and barren wastes abound, there are rich fields, green spots, sweet oases on the earth, that outweigh, if not exceed the sterile, hard, close-hearted many. Oh, sir, there's much sweet charity in life, much modest excellence the mass never dream of: there are thousands of Goldsmith's beggar-bating philanthropists, men whose weakness is to be thought by others systematic, cold and hard, but who in secret nourish a heart, open as day to melting charity. And as for women, blessings on them, pure charity in their souls is with chastity twin born; a female miser is a prodigy."

"It is gratifying to hear a man, so low in his estate, speak so cheerfully of our natures; these are sentiments not often heard within a parish workhouse."

"It is the vice of ignorance alone, to covet what it has not got, but sees in others, and take the alms benevolence bestows more as a right from its degree than compliment to their own importunate necessity. To such the acts that portions millions for the suffering poor is deemed a property, and not the offspring of a nation's bounty. But I am faint; once more accept my heartfelt thanks, the gratitude of a dying man."

"Nay, not so," replied the surgeon encouragingly; "not so. I've let you talk too long; I must prohibit further conference for to-night at least; to-morrow—"

"To-morrow!" interrupted the sick man, with a wan smile, as he mournfully shook his head. "No; for me no to-morrow will ever come—my course is run."

"Nourishment and rest will achieve miracles."

"Not for me, sir—it is too late, too late."

"Be of better heart; I shall yet see you assume the buskin again, hear your voice upon the stage, though in Squire Thornton's barn—cheer up, we'll get a bespeak for your benefit."

"The benefit and patronage, kind sir, will be in my parish-coffin."

"Not so; you deceive yourself; the house shall yet ring to your praise—you shall be again applauded to the echo."

"Ha!" exclaimed the actor, as a sudden thought crossed his mind, and the harmless pride of the idea flushed his wasted features, and for a moment brightened his faded eye: "Ha! well remembered: where is my coat?" he continued, as he felt over the bed, and drew from the foot of it his brown and threadbare garment. "Oh, here it is!—no, doctor, no, it is impossible; I feel my end is come; all honor to your skill, but I am convinced it is so, come to the last hour. There is a prescience in the bosom of the dying man, planted by Heaven's wisdom for his admonition, a fore-shadowing of the dread event that quite eludes the practice or research of shrewdest faculties. I feel, I know, the hand of death is on me. Nay, 'tis useless, sir, to test my pulse," he proceeded, as the surgeon, impressed by the deliberate tenor of his words, laid his hand on the patient's wrist; while Benson drew from the capacious pocket of his coat, a roll of papers, written with a broad margin, like the cast parts of a play. "If you could lay your finger on my soul, and note the weak flutterings there, how momentarily the fainting spirit lags, and dulls, and flickers, like the expiring candle, then would you understand what I alone have sense and knowledge of—I am dying, doctor—dying fast," he concluded faintly, as he sank lower in the bed, on which he had partly raised himself.

Lightly observed the change, which was too evident to be mistaken, and hurrying across the room, poured out a stimulant from the bottle on the chimney beam, and returning to the bed, assisted the patient, till he had drunk the reviving potion; then, resuming his seat, felt his pulse, and inquired in a kindly voice—

"Is there any friend that you would wish to see; any office I can do for you: any wish, compatible with my ability, I can hereafter perform: anything in these papers you wish attended to?"

"Yes, I remember," faintly murmured the dying man, opening his eyes and gazing round with awakened consciousness. "I had almost let it escape me—yes, yes!" and with difficulty raising himself on his elbow, he added: "No, I thank you, I have no time left to see any one; they have been here already—and, poor creatures, my only friends save you, sir, are doubtless in their sleep, cheating sharp appetite. Sleeping is the only opiate to a craving stomach; no, nothing, thank you! God help them, and grant them better business!" Then, with a sudden flush and an earnest interest, he resumed, as his eye reverted to the document in his hand:—"The only earthly thing I have to give, of any consequence, is this. I pray you to accept it. These pages are the emanations of deep thought, years of deliberate study, the result of a lifetime's contemplation: take it, sir, and read it. Heaven knows I am loth, here on my death-bed, to say one harsh word of my poor brotherhood, but—but I would not bequeath this manuscript to them; all my scenery, wardrobe, properties, I freely leave to them, for their general good—pray tell them so; but this—no, no, jealousy, sir, jealousy is the bane of us all; they would adopt the readings as their own, and not give even my memory the benefit and honor of the first conception; no, I rather present it to you, who will in private estimate the poor offering. It is the digest of my experience, and a commentary on the bard's chief character, *Gloucester*—my great part, sir, my *chef d'œuvre*, the one I made exclusively my own. You will find all my great hits, my workings up, my by-play, laughs and sneers, the business with the glove, the action of each scene, my tight dress, everything; with copious annotations on the whole piece. It is a compendium, sir, of unknown value to a man of parts and learning—you'll find it quite a treasure."

And the dying actor's eyes dilated, his cheeks glowed, and his words were delivered with a force and rapidity, in strange contrast to his emaciated appearance, as in his last moments the ruling passion of his life was evincing itself in the harmless egotism of his own perfection; forgetting that his hapless state, starved condition, and pauper-couch, formed a palpable negative to his asserted excellence; and that his whole life of unsuccessful struggle, and unrewarded labor, was a flat refutation to his implied talent and opinionated ability.

"No, I could not let them have it," he resumed, after a moment's breathing. "Everything else—but not this. Doddridge strove to rob me of it, before he left us to join the—the—ay! the Blackston company. No, no, I give it all, wholly, solely, to you. They would have pillaged me of my ideas—filched from me my master-piece of acting, and drawn down the applause that was only due to me—me, who digested all—conceived the whole. No! No! No!" and, exhausted with his effort and the long discourse, Benson closed his eyes and sank back speechless on his hard pallet, as he placed the roll of papers in the surgeon's hand.

Depositing in his coat the voluminous manuscript, and bending a compassionate look on the vain old man, who in the extremity of death could thus expatiate on the brief triumph of his strutting hour, lightly with gentle solicitude covered the exposed chest of the attenuated pauper in the scanty bed-clothes, and rising, proceeded to the door, to call up the nurse and give such directions as the sinking condition of his patient required, before retiring for the night to the sanctuary of his own abode; but turning round as he reached the door, to take a parting look at the miserable object of his care, he was surprised to see the gaunt figure of the player sitting erect in bed. His spare chest and bony shoulders, from which the tattered vesture of a shirt had fallen off, revealed the starting ribs, that, like circling hoops, protruded harshly from

beneath the tight discolored skin; his eyes were open, and appeared from the deep hollow sockets in which they were set, of an unnatural size and brightness; the few filaments of his scanty hair were glued with the death sweat in patches on his head and brow; his mouth was gaping, and the tremulous jaw and blue lips gave a dark and cavern aspect to the wasted and paralytic muscles that encompassed the cavity; stretching out his long shrivelled arm and bony fingers, he faintly beckoned the surgeon to return. Lightly obeyed the mute sign, re-closed the door, and returning to the bed, resumed his former seat, inquiring in a soothing voice, what further he required.

"Come nearer, good sir—near—er, close—put down your ear—listen," cried the patient in a faint tremulous whisper, waving with his thin hand for the other to approach closer, and placing one hand on his shoulder and the other on his arm, as he leant over the bed to accommodate his position to the surgeon's ear, he added: "Stay a moment, and see the end; I am now dying—gasping on the verge of life and death—Mark!—this is the end of all—Life's last act is on Nature's last scene—and I the expiring hero of my own brief play—speaking his death epilogue—you, the thin audience to my bankrupt benefit, sit, hearing the actor's moral period. The prompter's bell summons the slow descending curtain of the world—fold after fold it drops, even as the portals of my eyes, heavy and dark, fall on my earthly vision—" Then laying his hand on his companion's arm, to arouse all his attention, muttered, "The manuscript!" and after an instant's pause, concluded, as a faint smile of confidence lit up his hollow features, giving them for a moment a radiant aspect: "There is a world elsewhere!"

The last sentence was given with so much more energy than his previous utterance, that lightly remained in expectation that he would resume his theme, but feeling the pressure on his shoulders increase, he looked quickly around, and perceived by the fallen jaw and the cold pallor of the face, that his poor patient had, in that brief extract, shaken off this mortal coil.

Gently laying down the wasted body of the dead player, who, despite his irregular life, his contemned profession, and degraded person, had died with a quotation on his lips a churchman might have envied, and drawing the coarse sheet over the stiffening features, he turned from the bed, saying, as he left the melancholy scene:

"God have mercy on thee! thy busy, troublous act, is closed indeed; thy griefs, thy cares, thy little jealousies are over; thy hunger, cold, and thirst is done with; thy weariness of limb, thy sickening of the heart is past; thy momentary triumphs, thy glimpse of happiness, thy life-weary pilgrimage, is annulled forever. Poor Yorick! fare thee well! God help thy suffering, merry and enduring tribe for they can pluck from torturing care the very soul of true philosophy—cheerful contentment."

And with a mournful step and sorrowing countenance, lightly withdrew from the room of death, and summoning to their pleasurable and revolting duty the privileged crones of the house, to perform mortality's last decencies, the surgeon descended from the low attic, and quitted for the night the mansion of the unfortunate—the theatre of his skill and practices.

#### SINGULAR TASTES AND ANTIPATHIES.

Several illustrious men have evinced a marked predilection for certain days in the year. We know that Napoleon felt such a disposition for the 20th of March.

Charles V., said Brantome, was particularly fond of the festival of St. Mathias (24th of February), and sanctified it beyond all other days, because on that day he was elected emperor, on that day crowned, and on that day, also, he took King Francis prisoner—not himself, but through his lieutenants. Brantome adds, also, that the

emperor was born on the feast of St. Mathias (24th of February, 1500); that on the same day, in 1527, his brother Ferdinand was elected King of Bohemia; and that on the 24th of February, 1556, he abdicated the throne.

The 1st of January was to Francis I. what the 24th of February was to Charles V. Born on the 1st of January, it was on the 1st of January that this prince lost his father, that he became king, on which his daughter was married, and that on which Charles V. made his entry into Paris.

Sixtus V., born on Wednesday (13th of December, 1521), made his profession as a Franciscan friar on a Wednesday, was promised a cardinalship on a Wednesday, was elected pope on a Wednesday, and exalted to the dignity the following Wednesday.

Louis XII., some hours before his death (Thursday, May 14th, 1843), called his physicians and asked them if they thought he could live until the next day, saying that Friday had always been to him a fortunate day, that he had on that day engaged in enterprises which were uniformly successful, that he had ever gained battles on that day, and that having always considered it his happiest day, he wished he might die on it.

One of the Spanish kings could not endure any one in his presence who had taken tobacco. He had, besides, the mania of being incensed at any man's demanding the age of a woman, unless he had intentions of marriage.

Nothing could exceed the timidity, or we might say the poltroonery, of the celebrated moralist, Nicole: he dreaded travelling excursions on the water, and to the end of his life he never went into the streets without trembling in incessant fear lest a tile should fall on his head. He dwelt for a long time in the Faubourg St. Marcel, "because," said he, "the enemies who threatened Paris would enter by the Porte Saint Martin, and would be obliged, consequently, to traverse the whole city before they could arrive at his house."

Henry III., who had so decided a passion for little dogs, could not remain in the same room with a cat. The Duke D'Epemon fainted at the sight of a leveret. Marshall de Breze, who died in 1680, swooned at the sight of a rabbit, as related by Tallemant.

Marshal d'Albert got ill at a repast where either a suckling pig or a wild boar was served. Erasmus could not even smell a fish without getting feverish. Scagliar trembled all over at seeing water-cresses. Tycho Brahe felt his limbs failing when he encountered a hare or a fox. Bacon fell into a fainting fit during an eclipse of the moon. Bayle got convulsions when he heard the sound of water issuing from a spout. Lamoignon la Vayer could not endure the sound of any instrument. Favoriti, an Italian poet, who died in 1682, could not bear the odor of the rose.

## CANOVA AND HIS WORKS.

FROM THE GERMAN OF C. L. FERNOW.

Before the first half of the eighteenth century had entirely passed away, the scholars of Bernini had gradually suspended their laborious efforts to crowd the churches of Rome with apostles, saints, and monuments. Sculpture, exhausted as it were by these overstrained exertions, had sunk into a state of such helpless impotence, that scarce one new work of any importance was executed in Rome during the twenty years which preceded the appearance of Canova. Cavaceppi was the only sculptor of the time, who rose to any reputation, and he was chiefly employed in the restoration of ancient statues for the various collections of Rome.

The blind enthusiasm which for a century had been wasted on the tasteless extravagance of Bernini and his school, had at length died away. The master-pieces of antiquity—thanks to Winkelmann and Mengs—were again restored to honor and reputation; and the tasteless productions

which had so long been admired, and almost deified, became repulsive to eyes purified by the study of the antique.

The apparent pause in the progress of art, between 1760 and 1780, was but a necessary prelude to a new development of its resources. It was not enough that the corrupt mannerism of preceding years should have entirely disappeared—its injurious influence must have also died away, a re-awakened feeling for the purity of the antique must have called forth the desire for a higher excellence, in order to stimulate the effort to attain it. Prejudice must have ceased to usurp the seat of truth, and left the public mind unfettered and disposed to receive it. And thus, at the end of this dreary interval, every circumstance appeared to favor a better direction of public taste. But the master-mind was yet wanting to embody these higher aspirations in new and important works of art. It was under these circumstances Canova appeared, and began his brilliant and successful career. To him more than any other man sculpture is indebted for her regeneration then, and for much of the favor and sympathy with which she is now regarded by the public. For some years he stood alone, being in fact the only artist in his department in Rome, who was capable of undertaking large works. Busts, copies from the antique, and subjects of smaller size, were executed in other studios, but scarcely a single statue of life size was elsewhere to be seen.

So long as he had no living rival in the public favor, (it was ten years later that Thorwaldsen's Jason gave the first promise of his future fame), Canova was compared by his admirers to the greatest masters of ancient and modern times; and it was by no means unnatural that the enthusiasm of contemporaries should be disposed to overrate the merits of an artist, who like Canova knew so well how to flatter the taste of amateurs, and possessed in an eminent degree those qualities of heart and mind which win universal regard. But it is the privilege of great minds only, neither to be intoxicated by success, nor disheartened by adversity—and unfortunately Canova cannot be classed among their number. Indications that cannot be overlooked in reviewing his artistic career, prove too clearly that he did not escape altogether the influence of the unmeasured flattery of his panegyrists, by whom he was constantly surrounded as a prince by his courtiers. On the other hand, the rare gentleness, modesty, and simplicity of his character, happily counteracted in a great degree the effects of this unceasing adulation. Many of his works were ranked with the antique. Connoisseurs, who piqued themselves on their skill in all the refinements and mysteries of the art, preferred his Perseus even to the Apollo Belvidere. According to them the beauty of this ancient masterpiece had been equalled, while its faults had been skillfully avoided; and when, to the shame of the despoiler, the Apollo was carried away to Paris, they ventured to assert that the loss was by no means irreparable. So little did the artist himself shun a comparison with the antique, that when occasion offered, he placed the noblest works of Greece beside his own, and seemed to challenge a comparison. When, for example, his Perseus was exhibited for public criticism, or rather for public admiration, a plaster cast of the Apollo was placed on a lower pedestal beside it, and certainly to unpractised eyes played but an humble part, when compared with the marble statue of the Gorgon-slayer, aided by all the charms of exquisite finish as well as spotless material, and placed in the most favorable light. In like manner, the "Hercules of Glycon in repose," stood for many years next to Canova's frantic Hercules, hurling Lycus into the sea—in order, as it should seem, that he might place the merits of his furious rival in the most favorable light. Every impartial spectator must have felt the folly, to say the least, of courting such comparisons; but in the first case it was especially unwise, as the artist's misconception of the character of Perseus was thereby made the more palpably evident.

Nothing indeed but Canova's rare happiness in having no enemy, could have saved him from the disagreeable consequences of challenging criticism in a manner so naively daring. The flattering verdict of the Roman critics was amply confirmed in word and deed by the reigning pontiff. The Perseus and the Boxers were purchased for the Museum of the Vatican, into which no statues save antique had hitherto been permitted to enter. A papal decree of this time, which announces Canova's appointment to the office of conservator of the arts and antiquities in the Roman statues, designates him as the rival of Phidias and Praxiteles! Such an apotheosis was never before granted to any modern artist, and not to mention the honor of a marquise, a distinction to which many artists had been raised before him, Canova had now reached the highest worldly honor, which success in the arts can bestow. Nothing now seemed wanting but that posterity should ratify the sentence. But what is the guarantee for such a consummation? His merit, says his admirers, attested by the public voice, and sanctioned by a papal decree. But in the seventeenth century, Bernini himself was equally lauded both by the public and the popes. The self-same works, which posterity has pronounced the most extravagant aberrations of taste, kindled among his contemporaries an admiration which spread with his fame throughout Europe. So small is the dependence to be placed on the judgment of even the most cultivated public, during the lifetime of an artist.

A frequent examination of Canova's works, with a constant reference to the criticisms of the public and those fundamental principles of art on which they ought to rest, has led to the conviction that future critics will find much to moderate and correct in the decisions of their predecessors. But before we enter on a critical examination of the works, we will briefly state the principles on which we ground our judgment.

Among the arts whose aim is purely æsthetic, sculpture has the narrowest sphere, the simplest object, the severest precision of her forms. But despite these apparent restrictions, she alone can embody the ideal of the beautiful in its highest purity and strictest individuality of character. No art of antiquity so completely accomplished its aim, or left such perfect models for the guidance of all succeeding ages. In none is it more difficult for the moderns to equal the ancient masters, in none less possible to surpass them. The ideal of the human form has been carried to such perfection in the ancient statues of the gods and heroes of Greece, that modern art may seek in vain to reach a higher point of excellence in this direction; the very motive for efforts so lofty has ceased for ever to exist, unless she should vainly soar into the regions of the unrepresentable. But though the highest summit has been gained, the sphere of this art is by no means wholly preoccupied. The power of being new and original within the limits of the antique ideal is by no means denied to the modern artist. Despite the wondrous diversity of character in the ideal creations of ancient art, the source of its inspirations is still unexhausted. If the modern artist is resolved to be something more than a mere copyist of the ancients—if he does not aim at being new or original by striking into by-paths at the expense of good taste, he must necessarily invent new characters, and through them enlarge the sphere of ideal art. But this can only be accomplished by a strict adherence to the style of the antique.

In sculpture, as in every other art, there is but one pure and perfect style, even as there is but one sound and true standard of taste. The former is determined by the distinctive form or by the essential character of each species of being as manifested in the peculiarities of its structure; the latter is grounded on the natural constitution of the human mind. Both, therefore, from the objective and subjective necessities of the case, are essentially unchangeable in their nature. Both assist and combine in the production of the beautiful in art, both are made sensible to our minds